

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks. Prior to entry of this response, Claims 1-32 were pending in the application, of which Claims 1 and 15 are independent. In the Office Action dated July 5, 2005, Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101, Claims 1 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), and Claims 2-7, 9-14, 16-17, 19-24, and 26-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 8, 18, and 25 were objected to, but were deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Following this response, Claims 1-5, 7, 9-22, 24, and 26-33 remain in this application, independent Claim 33 being added by this Amendment. Applicants hereby address the Examiner's rejections in turn.

Applicants thank Examiner Zhen for the courtesy of a telephone interview on July 25, 2005, requested by the undersigned to discuss the status of the present patent application. During the interview, the Examiner stated that, in response to the Appeal Brief filed March 4, 2005, prosecution was reopened in the present patent application and the current Office Action dated July 5, 2005, was issued.

I. **Change to Attorney Docket Number**

Please note that the Attorney Docket Number for this application is now
14917.0233USU1/MS150850.02.

II. Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

In the Office Action dated July 5, 2005, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claim 1 has been amended and Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment overcomes this rejection and adds no new matter.

III. Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,507,351 ("*Bixler*"). Claim 1 has been amended to include allowed Claim 8's subject matter along with intervening Claim 6's subject matter. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to Claim 1 overcomes this rejection and adds no new matter. Claim 15 has been amended to include allowed Claim 25's subject matter along with intervening Claim 23's subject matter. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to Claim 15 overcomes this rejection and adds no new matter. Accordingly, independent Claims 1 and 15 each patentably distinguish the present invention over the cited art, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection of Claims 1 and 15. Claims 6, 8, 23, and 25 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Dependent Claims 2-5, 7, 9-14, 16-17, 19-22, 24, and 26-32 are also allowable at least for the reasons described above regarding independent Claims 1 and 15, and by virtue of their respective dependencies upon independent Claims 1 and 15. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection of dependent Claims 2-5, 7, 9-14, 16-17, 19-22, 24, and 26-32.

Moreover, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to dependent Claim 18 at least for the reasons described above regarding independent Claim 15, and by virtue of its dependency upon independent Claim 15.

IV. New Claims

Claim 33 has been added to more distinctly define and to round out the protection for the invention to which Applicants are entitled. New Claim 33 includes the subject matter covered by independent Claim 15 prior to the current amendment along with the subject matter covered by allowed Claim 18 and intervening Claim 17. Applicants respectfully submit that this claim is allowable over the cited art and that it adds no new matter.

V. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims. The preceding arguments are based only on the arguments in the Office Action, and therefore do not address patentable aspects of the invention that were not addressed by the Examiner in the Office Action. The claims may include other elements that are not shown, taught, or suggested by the cited art. Accordingly, the preceding argument in favor of patentability is advanced without prejudice to other bases of patentability. Furthermore, the Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any

such statement is identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

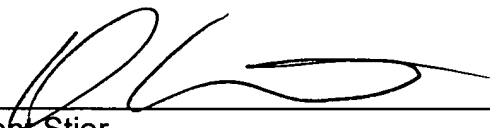
Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 13-2725.

Respectfully submitted,
MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.

P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0903
404.954.5066

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DKS:mdp



D. Kent Stier
Reg. No. 50,640

